

**FNQ NRM Ltd Directors Meeting
23 January 2004, 1:15 PM – 4:45 PM
Innisfail Office, 45 Rankin St, Innisfail
Ratified Minutes**

Present

Cr Mike Berwick	Chair
Bill Shannon	Industry
Peter Stanton	Conservation
Caroline Coppo	Community / Catchment
Chris Gloor	Coastal & Marine
Ken Atkinson	Upper Herbert
Cr Ray Byrnes	Local Government

Staff & Advisors

Brad Dorrington	A/- Executive Officer, FNQ NRM Ltd
Bill Kennedy	Department of Natural Resources & Mines (NR&M)

Apologies

Troy Wyles-Whelan	Traditional Owners
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1. Welcome & Apologies

Cr Mike Berwick declared this Director's Meeting open at 1:15PM.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

Directors Meeting held 23 January 2004.

Resolution 1: That the draft minutes of the Directors Meeting held 12 January 2004 are ratified without amendment.

3. Business arising from Minutes

3.1 Rainforest CRC / ATFI partnership proposal

Discussion:

Cr Ray Byrnes asked if anyone from the Company will be attending the Rainforest CRC / ATFI rebid workshop in Cairns on Tuesday 27 January. Brad Dorrington responded that he is attending and will report any further developments.

Resolution 2: That Brad Dorrington attends the CRC rebid workshop, monitors developments and reports back to the Board.

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3.2 Coordinator & Facilitator funding response to governments.

Discussion

Brad Dorrington tabled a draft letter to the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) regarding FNQ NRM Ltd concerns relating to the process and outcomes of the preliminary IFA funding process. Cr Mike Berwick read the letter aloud.

Resolution 3: That the draft letter be forwarded to the JSC, with the paragraph requesting an opportunity to meet with JSC amended to reflect the scheduled session with JSC at the Regional Groups Collective (RGC) Meeting on Friday 20 February.

3.3 IFA Extension Funding Proposal

Resolution 4: That the Board will consider the final IFA funding proposal at the meeting scheduled for Monday 16 February.

3.4 NLP (Landcare) Funding Proposals

Discussion

Cr Mike Berwick requested that Brad Dorrington address the NLP funding application included in the Agenda Papers. Brad summarised that the proposed project is a combination of Primary Green, the Mossman Joint Venture Partnership best practice project, comments from Directors at the Board Meeting held 12 January, and includes the scope to develop international linkages and recognition. This two year project would seek funding of \$312,000 in the first year. Brad also acknowledged the contribution of Neil Sing who has compiled the current proposal.

Brad then outlined how it is complemented by the second NLP funding proposal which is simply one year of salary and on-costs for a "Regional Landcare Facilitator". The Board Meeting held 20 December 2003 determined that a major focus should be to facilitate the adoption of best management practice (BMP) via certification systems and international linkages. Brad informed the meeting that he has sought JSC opinion regarding the eligibility of these activities, particularly pursuing international linkages, from Allan Dale who is supportive of the approach. As negotiations are current with potential partners and collaborators including Rainforest CRC and CSIRO Brad requested that the Board provide feedback on the current draft and consider the final proposal out of session by teleconference or e-mail.

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Mike suggested that paragraph 3 on page 1 be amended to reflect the positive impacts this proposal would have on biodiversity and the various aquatic matters for targets in addition to the sustainable use matters listed. Mike further stated that the mechanisms for facilitating international linkages needed to be stated in both proposals, be clearly linked and initiated at the outset of the program rather than toward the end

Ken Atkinson noted that despite the diverse nature of industries noted as being involved the grazing industry, specifically in the Upper Herbert Catchment, is not mentioned. Brad responded that he believes this is an oversight and the intent is that any primary producer is free to choose whether to participate or not. Bill Shannon stated that the aquaculture industry is expanding rapidly in the Wet Tropics and should be included.

The budget figures attributed to various industry sources were the topic of several queries and some general discussion. Brad clarified that these are in-kind contributions, though the proposal as presented does not clearly state this fact. It was noted that the budget appears significant, however the task is enormous and, as per the stated objectives, will only develop the program and commence implementation. The ongoing program will need to be considered in the Investment Strategy to be successful.

Mike then spoke to a "Sustainable Agriculture" document that he has developed and is included in the Agenda Papers. The theme of the paper is the development of an international framework for the certification of sustainable farming practice. Chris Gloor commented that it provides a sound foundation on which to develop such a system by outlining the rationale and principles to be applied, together with identifying the broader issues and benefits.

Resolution 5: That the Sustainable Agriculture paper is adopted as a foundation document in the investigation and development of international linkages for the Board's certification initiatives.

Resolution 6: That the Board will consider the final NLP funding proposals, including comments put forward at this meeting and further developments, out of session prior to the closing date of February 11.

3.5 Further Business Arising

DPI Forestry Operations in Upper Herbert Catchment

Peter Stanton tabled a report and draft letter to the Minister for Primary Industries regarding a field trip to the Upper Herbert to explore problems associated with State Government agency's poor environmental standards. This trip was an action item relating to Resolution 17 carried at the Board Meeting at Gosham Station on 20 December 2003.

Resolution 7: That draft letter be forwarded to the Minister

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4. Correspondence Report

4.1 Significant Correspondence

Cr Mike Berwick noted that the letter received from the Environmental Protection Agency has requested comment regarding the “Queensland Biodiversity Policy Framework” and inquired if this has occurred. Brad Dorrington responded that it will be in due course but is a low priority given the current work load and existing commitments. It was agreed by consensus that FNQ NRM Ltd should provide a response as invited. Cr Mike Berwick suggested that it would be appropriate for Peter Stanton to prepare a response, with support from Nigel Weston.

Resolution 8: That draft comments regarding the “Queensland Biodiversity Policy Framework” are prepared by Peter Stanton and Nigel Weston for consideration at the 16 February Board Meeting.

Resolution 9: That the correspondence report is accepted as presented.

4.2 Media Report

Resolution 10: That the media report is accepted as presented.

5. Finance Committee Report

5.1 Financial Statement

Bill Shannon informed the meeting that as he has been away this week Brad Dorrington will speak to the Financial Statement as necessary.

Brad referred to the Financial Statement supplied together with the Agenda Papers. It has been produced for this Directors Meeting as a stand alone set of financial reports and covers items 5.1 to 5.5 mentioned in the Agenda. It includes a Consolidated Balance Sheet, Consolidated Profit & Loss and Profit & Loss for each Job in the Chart of Accounts. Two additional reports namely the Budget versus Actual Expenditure for each Job in the Chart of Accounts and Twelve Month Cash Flow Projection are not currently available due to data entry backlogs.

Caroline Coppo inquired if this large document was to be provided at all Directors Meetings. Bill Shannon stated that this is the intent, which will ensure that Directors are sufficiently well informed to discharge their fiduciary duties. Caroline commented that the larger reports such as the individual Job Profit & Loss Reports could be condensed.

Resolution 11: That the Financial Statement is accepted as presented.

5.2 Rainforest CRC / NRM Plan Budget 2003 - 2004

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Brad Dorrington stated that the Foundation Funding contract with the Queensland Government has been executed and funds received. Sub-contracts can now be offered to the organisations listed in table1 for NRM Plan activities.

Brad recommended that a further project, “Vertebrate Distribution Mapping”, is approved for contracting. The Plan Team believe that it will add significant value to the biodiversity component of the trade off analysis and project prioritisation. The original project was prioritised out of Foundation Funding during the major rationalisation and then declined by the JSC in the IFA process.

The project leader, Dr Stephen Williams, recently had related research work published as the cover story in the science journal “Nature”.

Resolution 12: That a contract is offered to complete Vertebrate Distribution Mapping for the coastal and tablelands areas, with the commencement of the Upper Herbert mapping considered by the Board when this is completed.

Table 1 – Foundation projects for contracting with CRC

Project	Provider	Value
Preparation of NRM Plan	Rainforest CRC	\$65,900
Biodiversity mapping & trade off analyses	CSIRO	\$10,000
Vertebrate Distribution Mapping	Rainforest CRC	\$12,080
Data Management / Regional Directory	Rainforest CRC	\$25,800

5.3 Other Foundation contracts

Brad Dorrington advised that two projects external to CRC will be sub-contracted to undertake NRM Plan activities. These are detailed in table 2 for Information only.

Table 2 – Foundation projects for contracting external to CRC

Project	Provider	Value
NRM Plan – Pest Management Component	ACTFR	\$5,500
Investment Plan Targets for the Upper Herbert	DPI	\$47,900

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Cr Mike Berwick asked staff present, Brad Dorrington and Caroline Coppo, to leave the meeting while the Board discussed staff matters.

Resolution 13: That Brad Dorrington is offered the position of Executive Officer with FNQ NRM Ltd on a three year performance based contract, with a mutually agreed training and development program, at current salary which is subject to an annual review.

Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution 14: That the Board endorses the employment of all current staff beyond 30 June 2004, subject to funding and ongoing performance.

Cr Mike Berwick invited staff to return and read the resolutions carried.

Brad stated that he would accept the offer and thanked the Board, both personally and on behalf of the staff, for their confidence in the current team.

5.4 Board Operating Budget

Resolution 15: That the current pending claims for special assignment fees tabled are approved for payment.

Resolution 16: That standing approval for Directors to claim special assignment fees is granted for:

Chairs of Board convened Working Groups;

Directors attending meetings or events as a proxy for the Chair.

6. Plan Committee Report

6.1 Community Participation and Communication Strategy - NRM Plan

Cr Mike Berwick asked for comments regarding the draft Community Participation and Communication Strategy for the NRM Plan. Cr Ray Byrnes referred to page 44 of the agenda papers and stated that he believes that the “aims of the format for acknowledgements” stated in Section 6 (point 1) should be modified. The NRM planning process is an initiative of the Australian and Queensland Governments and should be acknowledged as such. Brad Dorrington responded there is no impediment to modifying point 1 in the document.

Resolution 17: That the Community Participation and Communication Strategy for the NRM Plan is further developed with regard to Board comments.

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6.2 Regional Investment Strategy (RIS) Format and Process

CR Mike Berwick advised that as discussion regarding the Regional Investment Strategy (RIS) had been brought forward into the business planning workshop further consideration will be held over to the next meeting.

6.3 Plan Documents for Release – Volumes 1, 2A and 2B

Brad Dorrington advised that in addition to the three volumes previously approved for release the summary brochure for each of volumes 2A and 2B are currently being developed. The text for these brochures will be circulated to the Plan Committee out of session.

Resolution 18: That the covers for Volumes 1, 2A, 2B and the 2 summary brochures are approved.

Resolution 19: That the public launch of the NRM Plan process and distribution of documents is to proceed on 16 February as per the Community Participation and Communication Strategy.

7. Constitution Committee Report

7.1 Membership Body

Bill Shannon addressed the meeting on behalf of the Constitution Committee and stated that finalisation of the Constitution was at risk of being overtaken by the activity associated with NRM Plan. Bill then referred the Discussion Paper included with the Agenda Papers and recommended that the Board endorse an option to progress both the Constitution and Membership Body with minimal delay.

There was general discussion and agreement by consensus that Option 3, “Concentrate on the critical task of consultation and accreditation of the Plan, while taking the opportunity to consult on this issue at the same time”, was preferred.

Cr Mike Berwick suggested that in addition to using this process solely for consultation it could be a component of the formation, particularly recruitment of members. There was further general discussion and agreement by consensus that this could be both appropriate and effective, however caution will be needed to avoid overloading those we are consulting with or otherwise impacting upon the NRM Plan consultation.

Resolution 20: That further to Resolution 16 the Community Participation and Communication Strategy for the NRM Plan is further developed to include the Membership Body for consideration at the 16 February Meeting.

Resolution 21: That Chris Gloor is appointed to the Constitution Committee.

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8. General Business

8.1 Casual vacancy on the Board

Resolution 22: That the casual vacancy on the Board is filled via a selection process similar to the original process.

8.2 Russell – Mulgrave Catchment Committee Issues

Brad Dorrington referred to a news article published in the Cairns Post on 27 December 2003, “River Group Investigated” regarding the Russell – Mulgrave Catchment Committee. The Company has no connection with this group; however it is important that Directors are aware of this issue which possibly involves NHT Funds.

Bill Shannon advised that the issue has also been noted and reported in the due Diligence Process.

8.3 Corporate Image

It was agreed that this item be held over pending further business planning.

8.4 Other Business

Nil Noted

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9. Future Activities

9.1 Regional Groups Collective Meeting – 18 to 20 February 2004, Brisbane

Resolution 23: Bill Shannon (given the unavailability of the Chair) and Brad Dorrington are to attend the Regional Groups Collective Meeting on 18 to 20 February.

9.2 Regional Coordination Group Meeting - 13 February, Cairns

Resolution 24: Cr Mike Berwick and Brad Dorrington are to attend the Regional Coordination Group Meeting on 13 February.

9.3 Far North Qld Pest Advisory Forum – 1 March 2004, Innisfail

As previously agreed it was noted that Cr Ray Byrne and Brad Dorrington are attending the FNQPAF meeting on March 1.

9.4 GBRMPA Water Quality Conference – 9 to 11 March, Townsville

Cr Mike Berwick stated that he is unsure of his availability and nominated Chris Gloor as his appropriate proxy for this forum should he be unavailable. Brad Dorrington stated that his attendance will depend upon the Plan consultation which should take precedence.

Resolution 25: Chris Gloor and Brad Dorrington, or appropriate staff member if unavailable, are to attend the GBRMPA Water Quality Conference on 9 – 11 March.

10. Close

Cr Mike Berwick declared this meeting closed at 4:45 PM.

Minutes ratified at the Directors Meeting held 16 February 2004.

Signed _____

Mike Berwick, Chair FNQ NRM Ltd.